

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please replace paragraph [0021] and with the following rewritten paragraph.

**[0021]** With a preliminary channel established between external agent 114 and the internal manager 104, the external negotiation engine 126 and ~~external~~ internal negotiation engine 128 may initiate protocol negotiation and reduction. In embodiments, the external agent 114 may transmit an external protocol table 134 as illustrated in FIG. 3 to the internal manager 104. The external protocol table 134 may specify which protocols external agent 114 may be configured to use. When received by the internal manager 104, the external protocol table 134 may be compared to an internal protocol table 136, indicating a set of security protocols available for use by internal manager 104. Either one ~~[[or]]~~ of external protocol table 134 and internal protocol table 136 may include fields indicating, for example, transport layer security (TLS), secure socket layer (SSL), Kerberos, secure IP (IPSec) or other available protocols or standards. The negotiation engine 128 associated with the internal manager 104 may identify one or more protocols mutually supported by external agent 114 and internal manager 104, as illustrated in FIG. 3.